



**World Leprosy Day  
Sunday 26th January 2020**

World Leprosy Day is on Sunday 26th January 2020 and members of the Order will be marking the day in a variety of ways – including offering prayer for those affected by leprosy and by the prejudice and discrimination that often results from it.

**FOR WHAT, AND HOW, SHOULD WE PRAY ON THIS IMPORTANT DAY?**

The Global Leprosy Strategy 2016-2020 "Accelerating towards a leprosy-free world" (endorsed by the World Health Organisation's Technical Advisory Group on leprosy) was developed through a series of consultations with various stakeholders during 2014 and 2015. Inputs were provided by national leprosy programmes, technical agencies, independent leprosy experts, public health experts, funding agencies and representatives of affected patients and communities. The strategy is built around three major pillars: (i) strengthen government ownership and partnerships; (ii) stop leprosy and its complications; and (iii) stop discrimination and promote inclusion. Its goal is further reduction in the global and local leprosy burden, thereby aiming for zero children with leprosy-affected disabilities, a reduction of new patients diagnosed with leprosy-related deformities to less than one per million population and a repeal of all laws that allow discrimination of leprosy patients.

These three pillars present us with a way of focusing our prayers. In addition, a short passage from Matthew 8 gives opportunity for reflection on the transforming love of God in Jesus Christ.

**A READING FROM THE GOSPEL OF ST MATTHEW**

When Jesus had come down from the mountain, great crowds followed him; and there was a leper who came to him and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean.' He stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, 'I do choose. Be made clean!' Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. Then Jesus said to him, 'See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.' (Matthew 8)

### THREE SHORT PRAYERS FOR WORLD LEPROSY DAY

Let us pray.

#### A PRAYER FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP

We pray, O God, for the nations of the world and for those who lead them, that they and we may set aside all that limits co-operation and may seize upon all opportunities to confront the challenges of leprosy. May we work together for its eradication and may bring healing to those who suffer from its effects, seeking always the flourishing of neighbour and the wellbeing of all; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### A PRAYER FOR THE ENDING OF LEPROSY AND ITS COMPLICATIONS

O God, whose Son our Lord Jesus Christ went about doing good and healing all kinds of illness; continue that his gracious work among us today; inspire those around the world who care for those with leprosy, who seek to prevent its continued spread and all those whose skills and compassion is improving the lot of those who suffer; and through them advance the purpose of your love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### A PRAYER TO PROMOTE INCLUSION & END DISCRIMINATION

O Lord God, who art the King of righteousness, lead us all in the ways of justice and righteousness and set a love of peace in our hearts. Give us grace to challenge all injustice and oppression; open our eyes to the impact of prejudice, to economic wrongs and social bias; deepen our concern for the sick, (especially those with leprosy), the elderly, the poor and the excluded, and stir in us all a sense of responsibility for one another as members of the One Body, in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Reading from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Prayers adapted variously from New Every Morning (New Edition) 1973 and other sources.*

**The Reverend Alan Gyle SChLJ, Almoner**

The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem  
(The Grand Priory of England and Wales)